

### Asia-Pacific Counter-IED Fusion Center Monthly IED Activity Report



**DOI: 31 May 2017** 

### About the APCFC

The Asia-Pacific C-IED Fusion Center is the premier center for irregular warfare analysis in the U.S. Pacific Command. The center develops and synchronizes C-IED and EOD programs and regional engagements. The center resources USARAPC C-IED training to ensure U.S., Allied, and Partner Nations survivability.



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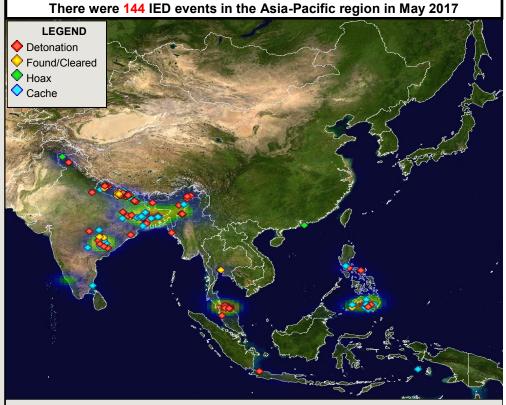
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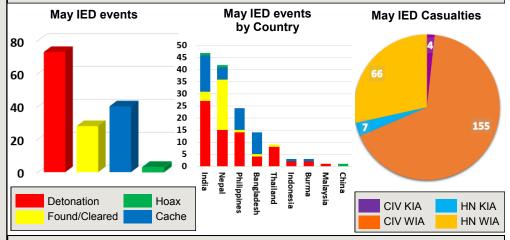
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Executive Summary: In May, IED events in the Asia-Pacific region slightly increased from last month (up 16%), however, there was a spike in the IED-related casualty rate (over 3.5 times higher than April). In South Asia, IED events more than doubled from last month, while in Southeast Asia, events decreased by half. There was one reported IED event in Northeast Asia: an IED hoax in Hong Kong.

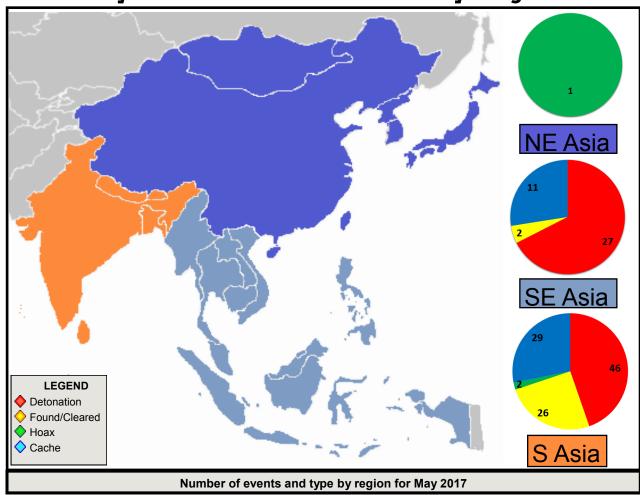


Icons depict events for May 2017; heat map depicts event density from May 2016 - May 2017



This document is limited to those personnel performing military, intelligence, law enforcement, or security duties in support of C-IED operations.

### May Asia-Pacific IED Events by Region

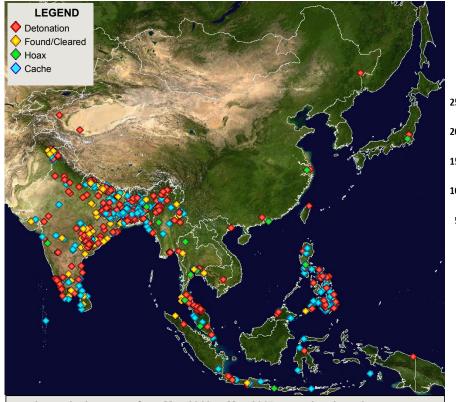


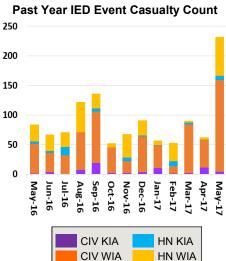
#### **Executive Summary (Continued)**

In South Asia, IED events increased from 43 events in April to 103 events in May. IED-related casualties also increased this month, from 31 casualties in April to 57 casualties in May. In Bangladesh, there were 14 IED events (compared to 10 in April) which resulted in seven IED-related casualties (**see pg. 8**). In India, there was an 88% increase in IED activity and a 63% increase in IED-related casualties from the previous month (**see pg. 9**). In Nepal, local elections sparked widespread political violence related resulting in over 40 IED events (**see pg. 10**).

In Southeast Asia, IED events decreased from 55 events in April to 40 events in May. Despite this decrease, there was a notable increase in IED-related casualties following two mass casualty incidents in Thailand (see pg 13). In the Philippines, there was a 12% increase in IED activity from last month, while IED-related casualties dropped by 31% (see pg. 12). In Indonesia, a 24 MAY twin PBIED attack at a bus terminal in Jakarta resulted in the deaths of two attackers, three civilians, and wounded a dozen security forces and civilians (see pg. 15).

### PACOM IED Events - Past 12 Months



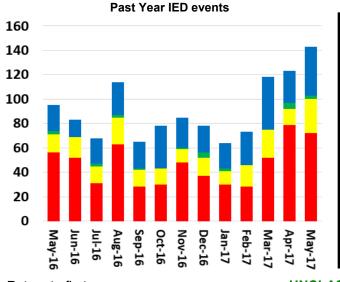


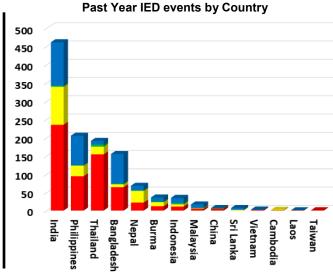
Icons depict events from May 2016 to May 2017; occasional overlap occurs

South Asia sees the highest level of IED events in the region, primarily due to India's high activity. IED activity across the region is often centered around periods of political unrest or contested elections. Devices thrown or emplaced during those outbreaks of violence vary widely in complexity (e.g. basic, command-wire to radio-controlled) and lethality.

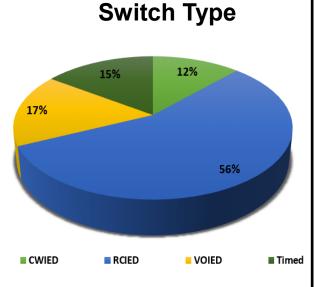
Southeast Asia sees approximately half the activity of South Asia, with the Philippines and Thailand as the primary contributors to the number of events. While Thailand's IED activity is primarily attributable to Muslim-Malay insurgents in the south, the Philippines faces communist, jihadist, and Moro separatist threats. By comparison, attacks in Indonesia and Malaysia are far less frequent.

Northeast Asia sees relatively few IED attacks and they can often be attributed to an individual's act of protest against an employer, the government, or retaliation against an acquaintance. Disaffected groups, such as the Uyghurs in China, occasionally incorporate IEDs in their attacks. Press reporting from the region is limited and generally unreliable, therefore some events may not be reflected.

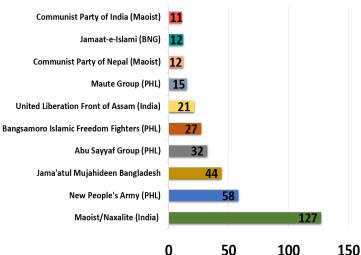




### IED Activity - Past 12 Months



### **Group Affiliation**



IED reporting and casualty statistics derived from open sources are not confirmed; statistics are presumed to be approximations. Graphics represent known switch type and group affiliation.

### Incident Highlight: Blasts in Quiapo Raise Questions

Two attacks in the span of a week hit the town of Quiapo, a suburb of Metro Manila have raised concerns about the growing capacity for ISIS-aligned militants to operate in the northern Philippines, the attacks occurred on 28 APR and 6 MAY. While ISIS quickly claimed responsibility for both events, Philippine security forces and the government officials disputed these claims.

The 28 APR attack occurred near a commercial area, injuring 14 civilians. The device was described as a pipe bomb incorporating black powder. Though police have insisted that the attack was part of a personal dispute, ISIS claimed responsibility for the blast on 29 APR. The attack coincided with the 30th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) meeting being held in Manila. Following the detonation, authorities raided the Islamic Center in Barangay 648 in an attempt to capture the suspected bomb maker, Saro. During the raid, authorities recovered various IED components similar to those used in the 28 APR device, ammunition, and bulk smokeless powder.



Aftermath of the 6 MAY attack

The 6 MAY event included two IED detonations, killing two people and wounding 11 others. The first detonation occurred at 1800 local time, targeting Nasser Abinal, the Shiite Imam of the Manila Golden Mosque. An individual wearing the shirt of a well-known local delivery company brought a package addressed to Abinal to the Mosque's office; the device detonated during the exchange, killing both an office worker and the courier, and injuring four others. Police are investigating the possibility that the individual who delivered the package was a female suicide bomber; post blast analysis indicates the device was remotely triggered. The second detonation occurred approximately two and half hours later while police were holding a press briefing; authorities suspect the second detonation was meant to target first responders.

Additional evidence that could point towards ISIS-PHL involvement includes the targeting of a Shia Imam which is a rare occurrence in the Philippines and is consistent with ISIS' global strategy to exploit sectarian rifts. These attacks come against the backdrop of other recent ISIS-PHL attacks which have seen the ISIS-PHL push further and further outside of their normal area of operations of the southern Philippines over the past year, the most recent of which includes an attempted KFR mission on Bohol in April.

Beyond the question of responsibility for the attacks, a couple of other interesting points have emerged. First, security experts have been speculating that if ISIS is involved, the blasts could have been dry runs for future attacks. The second point is that the Philippine National Police Chief has said there was a possibility that the devices used in the 6 MAY attacks were made by an ISIS-aligned group from Mindanao, such as Abu Sayyaf.

Sources: Rappler (4/28/17) Rappler (4/29/17) Rappler (4/30/17) CNN PHL (5/7/17) Manila Bulletin (5/8/17) ABS CBN (5/8/17) CNN PHL (5/9/17) ABS CBN (5/9/17) CNN PHL (5/10/17) Rappler (5/28/17)

### Special Assessment: Nepal - Local Elections Drive IED Violence Spike

On 14 MAY, Nepal held its Phase I local elections, covering three of the provinces. In the two weeks leading up to Phase I, election violence erupted across all three provinces, resulting in at least 36 IED events, incidents of assault, and kidnapping of political rivals. Despite the threat of violence and intimidation from rival parties, the voter turnout was 71%, speaking to the desire for the Nepalese to engage in participatory government.

These episodes of violence are the latest in a country plagued by political and social volatility since 1990, when the Nepali Congress (NC) and allied leftist parties began agitating for constitutional reforms to the parliamentary monarchy system. The NC won a majority of seats in the 1991 election, and began reshaping the Nepalese political and economic landscape. However, new economic reforms caused prices to spiral out of control, leading to violent unrest and ultimately the radicalization of many leftist activists; these same activists later engaged in armed struggle to replace the parliamentary democracy with a people's democratic republic, kicking off over 10 years of civil war.



Phased election timeline by province: Phase I held on 14 MAY and Phase II will be held on 28 JUN

The last local elections were held in 1997; when the five-year terms expired in 2002, elections were not held because of the civil war, and many positions were filled by appointed bureaucrats. Meanwhile, the national government passed the Local Self-Governance Act, which further solidified local bureaucrats' power by assuming a laissez-faire attitude in regards to local governance. The lack of public accountability through elections ultimately led to widespread corruption and a lack of transparency. The new constitution, ratified in September 2015, requires local, provincial, and national elections to occur with a specific timeframe. Because of episodes of political violence starting in 2015, the government had previously determined to split the 2017 local elections into Phase I (14 MAY) and Phase II (28 JUN); the government's determination to hold elections despite threats of violence represents a significant step towards increasing transparency and committing to the institutionalization of democratic values.

Despite this forward progress, the new constitution continues to be contentious; waves of protests and civil unrest have been on-going since September 2015. Agitating groups, many of which are comprised of ethnic minorities with ties to India, have been protesting re-districting, disproportional representation, and claims of unfair treatment of ethnic minorities (see **September 2015 Special Assessment**). While the protests have largely died out over the last six months, some ethnic minority groups have called for the constitution to be amended prior to Phase II elections; while India initially backed the agitating parties' demands, their stance changed in April 2017: they encouraged the parties to participate in the election without constitutional amendments. Concurrently, Nepal's government made the decision on 18 MAY to dismiss charges against agitating Madhesi and Tharu groups responsible for some of the worst violence in 2015; this change reflects efforts to encourage maximum participation and resolve lingering dissatisfaction. The government made another move towards inclusivity when they pushed back Phase II elections to accommodate Ramadan; the Muslim population of Nepal is small, but they specifically requested that elections be delayed so they could participate.

The result of efforts to be inclusive have led to several groups banding together to put forward candidates for the 28 JUN election. Three parties active in the restive Tarai region, the Rastriya Janata Party Nepal (RJPN), Federal Socialist Party Nepal (FSPN), and the Nepal Prajatantrik Forum have formed a tenuous alliance. Despite tentative agreements to field candidates, the RJPN, recently formed from six Madhesi minority groups, put forth two demands before they will participate: an increase in the number of local units and passing a constitutional amendment. On 23 MAY, the government moved to fulfill one of the group's demands: 22 local units were added to the southern provinces; however, the move was blocked by the Supreme Court. There was also pushback from the Election Commission, who flatly told the government that the creation of new local units before the 28 JUN election was unfeasible.

Moving forward, it is highly likely that violence will continue to play a role at all levels in the election process of Nepal. This is in part due to the inability for any government to meet all the demands of every special interest group; and it is also in part due to how normalized general political violence has become. Additionally, there are groups that will likely never be willing to engage in participatory government, like the Janatantrik Tarai Mukti Morcha led by Jay Krishna Goit, who have been responsible for most of the IED activity in Nepal over the last six to eight months (see **March 2017 VOI**). Likewise, the CPN(M) led by Chand (**see VOI**) has stepped up their radical activity in an attempt to create chaos and continue armed struggle in Nepal. Significant internal challenges face the country as they continue to pursue fair and honest democratic governance.

Sources: Asia Foundation (4/26/17) Republica (5/10/17) al Jazeera (5/14/17) Diplomat (5/19/17) Kathmandu Post (5/19/17) Hindu (5/21/17) Republica (5/22/17) Republica (5/22/17) Outlook India (5/23/17) Hindustan Times (5/29/17) First Post (5/31/17)

### Person of Interest / VEO of Interest

#### **SUBJECT: Sohel Mahfuz**

ALIAS: Hatkata Mahfuz; Kata Sohel FROM: Kushtia, Bangladesh AREA OF OPERATION: Burdwan, West Bengal, India; Dhaka, Bangladesh IDENTIFYING MARK: Missing left hand

Bangladesh has recently experienced a ramp-up in IED TTP sophistication, particularly amongst ISIS-inspired VEOs, to include Neo-Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (Neo-JMB). Sohel Mahfuz maintains the historical JMB network, IED expertise and cross-border smuggling capability to remain instrumental in this increased effectiveness in IED operations in Bangladesh. Mahfuz entered the Bangladesh Jihadist scene under the JMB-associated proxy student wing, Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS), and later officially joined JMB. However,



after Mahfuz proclaimed himself leader of JMB in 2010, he experienced a falling-out with the VEO and fled across the border to Burdwan, West Bengal, India.

Following possible involvement in the 2014 Burdwan IED attack, Mahfuz returned to Bangladesh and began to work closely with JMB-associate and future ISIS Emir of Bangladesh, Tamim Chowdhury. In the era of ISIS influence and aspirational links being made throughout South Asia, Mahfuz and Chowdhury worked to solidify the Neo-JMB terror structure in Bangladesh. With his ability to easily move across the India-Bangladesh border, Mahfuz quickly developed a niche for moving explosives and small arms from India in support of Neo-JMB attack operations in Bangladesh. News media reported that Mahfuz was instrumental in leveraging cross-border smuggling routes to support the relatively effective 1 JUL 16 Holey Artisan Bakery attack within the diplomatic zone of Gulshan, Dhaka. While former Emir Chowdhury was killed and Neo-JMB remains without a public facing leader to this day, Mahfuz remained operational as an effective Neo-JMB procurement agent and explosives expert. News media has recently reported Mahfuz is involved with smuggling Commercial Grade Explosives (CGE) from India.

Mahfuz's emerging role in Neo-JMB comes at a time when a relative ramp-up in IED TTPs includes increased integration of 555 integrated circuit timed switches, female suicide bombers, an influx of PBIED suicide vests/belts, and more effective India CG and (peroxide-based) homemade explosives. Further characterizing Mahfuz's role within Neo-JMB networks will not only help asses ISIS influence but also reveal the potential drivers behind increased IED effectiveness in Bangladesh.

Sources: Daily Star (9/2/16) Dhaka Tribune (9/3/16) Indian Express (10/17/16) Dhaka Tribune (1/9/17) Independent (3/20/17) Dhaka Tribune (5/31/17)

### **VEO: Communist Party of Nepal Maoist**

TTPs: IED operations, assault, querilla warfare, extortion, political violence

The history of the Communist party of Nepal Maoist is convoluted, primarily because there are several separate groups that have shared the same name. The first iteration of the CPN -M formed in 1995 by Pushpa Kamal Dahal (alias Prachanda), ultimately leading to the start of the civil war in 1996; the CPN-M's armed wing, the People's Liberation Army, Nepal (PLA), engaged in guerilla warfare tactics and IED attacks against government targets and security forces. Following the end of the civil war in 2006, the CPN-M moved from an



insurgent organization to a legitimate political party; Dahal became Prime Minister in 2008. In 2009, Dahal changed the name of his party to Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist-Center); he has continued to be involved in politics, recently serving another term as Prime Minister.

Following the end of the civil war, a militant commander from the original CPN-M, Mohan Baidya (alias Kiran), became increasingly alienated from the new mainstream; Kiran and Dahal disagreed on whether to continue armed conflict or to work towards lasting peace and stability. Kiran finally broke away in 2012, taking the more radicalized and militant elements with him. Referred to as the Baidya Maoists, the group engaged in political violence against rival parties.

The third iteration of the CPN-M came about in 2014, when Netra Bikram Chand (alias Biplab), a guerilla commander from the civil war era, broke away from Kiran's group to form the CPN(M). Chand's group broke away in order to form a more radical group with intent to reignite open hostilities. Approximately 1/3 of Kiran's group, (the most radical individuals), defected with Chand. Chand's group has since been conducting assaults and IED attacks. During May 2017, the CPN(M) focused on disrupting the election process, intimidating candidates, and conducting IED operations. Going forward, the CPN(M) will likely continue to evolve as a means to continue the "People's War", engaging in political violence to push a more radical agenda into the mainstream.

Sources: Mount Holyoke College Depart of State (9/6/12) Indian Express (11/10/14) Hindu (11/24/14) Hindustan Times (8/3/16) Review Nepal (2/3/17)

### South Asia: May Significant Activity

#### Bangladesh

On 8 MAY, three militants attacked an Ahmadiyya Imam with bladed weapons, wounding him severely. The three claimed the preacher was spreading the wrong kind of Islam, and denied connection with any specific group. However, both Ansar al-Islam (formerly the Ansarullah Bangla Team) and Neo-JMB militants have attacked religious minorities in the past. **Dhaka Tribune** (5/9/17)**Dhaka Tribune** (5/22/17)

On 25 MAY, a Bangladesh court sentenced Maolana Saidur Rahman, described as a "ringleader" of the Neo-JMB, to seven years of imprisonment. He was accused of abuses of the Koran, misinterpreting it's text to incite violence, and spearheading a number of attacks to include the July 2016 Holey Artisan Bakery attack that resulted the death of 22 civilians. **Daily Mail** (5/25/17)

#### India

On 5 MAY, it was reported that ISIS influence is spreading in India, and of the 75 individuals detained thus far, Kerala state had the most recruits (21 of the 75). Authorities suspect there are approximately seven ISIS-aligned modules in India at this time; an additional 75 Indians are believed to have travelled to Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan. **Hindustan Times (5/5/17)** 

In early May, authorities discovered militant online tutorial videos made in Kashmir on social media platforms, despite the government's ban of social media site in the area. One video from 3 MAY taught viewers how to use small arms, throw a grenade, and build a Molotov cocktail. **Kashmir Narrator (5/5/17)** 

In early May, press reported that the Maoist insurgency is increasing its use of locally made explosive devices, including improvised mortars and rockets, and explosive-tipped arrows. Improvised rockets were first used against Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) in 2012, and have been used as recently as April 2017. Explosive-tipped arrows were first used during the Sukma attack on 25 APR against CRPF. **Hindustan Times (5/9/17)** 

On 25 MAY, a key Indian Mujahideen (IM) operative, Shauhaib Pottanikkal, was arrested at the Karipur International airport in Kerala. Pottanikkal was accused of involvement in the July 2008 Ahmedabad serial bombing that killed 56 and wounded 240. He is also known to be close to IM leaders Riyaz and Iqbal Bhatkal. **Times of India (5/25/17)** 

#### Nepal

On 24 MAY, Prime Minister Dahal resigned to honor an agreement between his party, the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist-Center), and the opposition Nepali Congress party. An election for the new prime minister will be held in the first week of June. The agreement requires the parties to trade leadership until the parliamentary election planned for February 2018. **NDTV (5/24/17)** 

#### **Maldives**

The murder of blogger Yameen Rashid in Malé on 23 APR has sparked further threats of violence online against Rashid's supporters by individuals purporting radical Islamic principles. Death threats were made against Rashid's family, friends and others promoting secularism; additionally, a website published an article and infographics across social media platforms praising and justifying Rashid's murder as justice for apostasy and encouraging others to kill atheists. **Maldives Independent** (5/10/17)

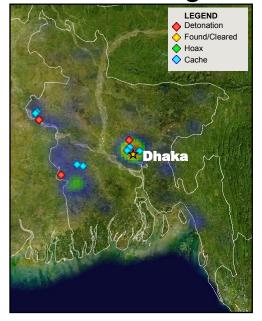
In early May, Police arrested a Maldivian man for raising an ISIS flag on Malé's Henveyru Artificial Beach. Authorities declined to comment on the man's motivations. A picture of the flag was posted on Facebook on a newly formed profile, along with a message claiming ISIS has a foothold in the Maldives. **Maldives Independent (5/11/17)** 

#### Sri Lanka

On 12 MAY, unknown assailants threw a grenade at the Sri Lanka Medical Council building. The grenade did not explode, and was defused by the bomb squad. This is not the first incidence of attack on the facility, however police have failed to make any breakthroughs in investigating these events. Various groups have protested in the attack, calling for protection of the facility and arrest of those responsible. **Colombo Page (5/13/17)** 

On 21 MAY, unknown assailants threw a Molotov cocktail at Kurunegala Maligapitiya Jumma mosque; it was the third attack on mosques in a week. The attacks have drawn condemnation by the U.S. as well as other countries. Police suspect the Buddhist extremist organization, Bodu Bala Sena (BBS) was responsible for the attacks. This is the 15th attack on minority Muslims since April 2016. The Muslim Council of Sri Lanka has called for unity in the wake of the attacks, and is demanding action to find the perpetrators. Colombo Page (5/21/17) BD News24 (5/21/17) Colombo Page (5/22/17)

## Bangladesh: May IED Events



There were four IED detonation events, one found and cleared event, and nine cache events.

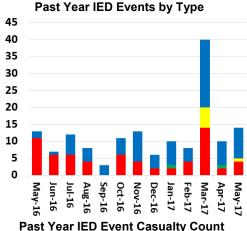
On 6 MAY, an IED cache was found and cleared in Lebutala, Jhenaidah Sadar, Khulna. Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) team conducted "Operation Subtle Split" in an attempt to retrieve a cache from the house of Sharafat Hossain. The cache contained eight IEDs, one unspecified bomb, seven grenades, unspecified devices, one 9mm pistol, six unspecified bullets. India Today (5/7/17) Risingbd (5/8/17) Bdnews24.com (5/7/17) The Independent (5/8/17)

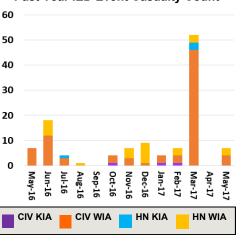
On 7 MAY, a PBIED detonated in Bazrapur, Khulna. Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), DMP CTTC team, District Police Bureau of Investigation and a bomb disposal unit conducted a raid in an attempt to apprehend two Neo-JMB militants. The first militant detonated a PBIED immediately after sustaining wounds in a small arms fire exchange with security forces outside the building the militants were held up in. The second militant detonated his device as security forces closed in on his position inside the building. **First Post (5/7/17) The Express Tribune (5/7/17) DhakaTribune (5/7/17)** 

On 11 MAY, a PBIED detonated and an IED cache was recovered in Benipur, Godagari, Rajshahi. Local police forces conducted "Operation Sun Devil" in an attempt to subdue five Neo-JMB militants. Militants detonated PBIEDs and killed two policemen and five civilians. The cache contained eleven IEDs, one pistol, two rounds of ammunition and one magazine. **Economic Times** (5/11/17) Daily Star (5/11/17)BDNews24 (5/12/17)

On 16 MAY, an IED cache was recovered in Chuadanga, Jhenidah, Khulna. RAB and local police forces conducted recovery operations after the apprehension of two Neo-JMB militants. The cache contained two suicide vests, five IEDs, 186 circuit boards, one anti-personnel mine, and four containers of chemicals. **Prothom Alo (5/17/17) Daily Star (5/17/17)** 

On 28 MAY, an IED cache was recovered following a raid in Genda, Savar, Dhaka. Militants also set off nine explosions when security forces entered a room in a hideout. The cache contained seven grenades, three suicide vests, ball bearings, batteries, gunpowder, bomb-making materials, mobile phones and laptops. Daily Star (5/28/17) Dhaka Tribune (5/28/17)

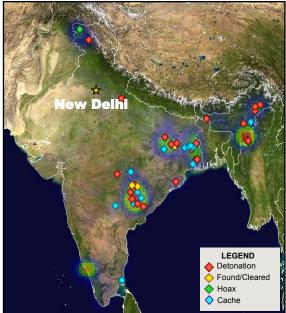




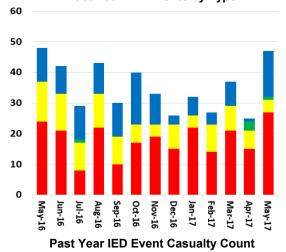
In May, IED activity remained consistent with the previous month, due primarily to raids on Neo-JMB hideouts; security forces execute counterterrorism (CT) operations based on intelligence gathered for militants arrested in previous raids. The two named operations in May, 'Subtle Split' and 'Sun Devil' led to the recovery of multiple IEDs, including suicide vests. Following patterns established in recent months, Neo-JMB caches recovered in May showed increased sophistication over historical norms. Over the next month, IED event levels will likely remain consistent as CT operations continue.

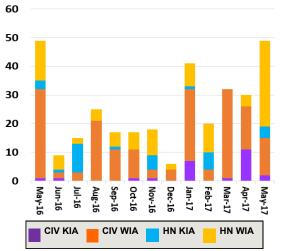
IED reporting and casualty statistics derived from open sources are not confirmed; statistics should be considered approximations.

# India: May IED Events



Past Year IED Events by Type





There were 27 IED detonation events, four found and cleared events, 15 cache events, and one hoax event.

On 3 MAY, an IED detonated against police personnel in Bhamragarh, Gadchiroli, Maharashtra; one policeman was killed and up to 22 were wounded. The detonation was powerful enough to flip the police's mine-protected vehicle. **Indian Express (5/4/17)** 

On 5 MAY, an IED detonated against a Home Guard near Chintapalli, Visakhapatnam, Andra Pradesh; one Home Guard member was killed. The device was likely emplaced during road construction four years ago. **The Hindu (5/5/17)** 

On 8 MAY, an IED detonated against Territorial Army personnel in Lokchao, Tengoupal, Manipur; two Territorial Army personnel were killed and two were wounded. The United National Liberation Front (UNLF) claimed the attack. **Nagaland Post (5/11/17)** 

On 14 MAY, IEDs detonated as part of election violence in Raiganj, Domkal, and Pujali, West Bengal; at least four party workers were wounded. **First Post (5/15/17)** 

On 16 MAY, a VOIED detonated targeting a former Special Police Officer and current political activist in Kishtwar, Jammu and Kashmir; one civilian was injured. The device was emplaced in the vehicle's gearbox and designed to detonate via a wire attached to the driver door. The main charge was reportedly "locally made" explosives. Police claim to have resolved the case with the arrest of five Lashkar-e Tayyiba (LeT) members. Hindustan Times (5/16/17) Indian Express (5/16/17) Web India 123 (5/16/17)

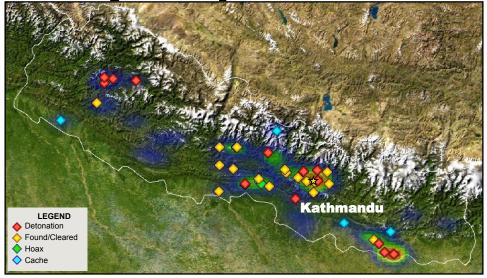
From 22 to 26 MAY, IED caches were recovered as a part of police operation to shut down crude bomb factories in West Bengal. Over the course of a week, over 700 crude bombs were recovered by security forces. **Indian Express (5/26/17)** 

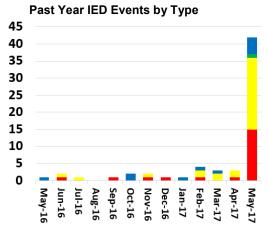
Overall IED activity increased substantially in May, with activity in all four major IED activity zones. Activity in the red corridor accounted for the majority of the increases this month.

Maoist activity appears to be experiencing a sustained upwards trend, primarily focused around roads and other lines of transportation, as they attempt to block construction and the incursion of security forces into their territory. The increase in activity is possibly the result of a more aggressive posture on the part of security forces, which appear to be conducting more operations resulting in cache recoveries this month.

While not unprecedented, several large crude bomb cache recoveries in West Bengal and, presumably, the associated shutdown of the factories that made them, may result in a short-term reduction in regional IED activity, though long term reductions are unlikely without policy changes.

Nepal: May IED Events





There were 15 IED detonation events, 21 found and cleared events, five cache events, and one hoax event.

On 7 MAY, an IED cache was recovered by police in Gauridanda, Bardibas, Mahottari, Janakpur. The cache contained explosives, two watches, six detonators, IED manuals, and aluminum phosphate. **Kathmandu Post (5/8/17)** 

On 10 MAY, an IED was found and cleared by Nepal Army EOD in Loanthali, Madhyapur Thimi, Bhaktapur, Bagmati. The IED incorporated a gas cylinder. **Kathmandu Post (5/12/17)** 

On 10 MAY, three IEDs were found and cleared from residences of political candidates in Nawalparasi. Authorties suspect the radicalized political organization, CPN-M (see VOI), was

responsible for emplacing the socket bombs outside opposing candidates' houses. Kathmandu Post (5/11/17)

On 11 MAY, an IED detonated at the Sagarmatha Zonal Transport Management Office in Lahan, Siraha, Sagarmatha. The IED incorporated a pressure cooker. **Republica** (5/11/17)

On 14 MAY, an IED was found and cleared by Nepal Army EOD outside the residence of a mayoral candidate. The IED was described as a socket bomb in a bag labeled 'danger.' **Online Khaber (5/14/17)** 

On 14 MAY, an IED detonated near Panchase Secondary School (used as a polling place) in Belkot Gadhi-4, Nuwakot, Bagmati; one suspect was arrested. **Online Khaber (4/14/17) Kathmandu Post (5/14/17)** 

On 17 MAY, an IED was found and cleared by Nepal Army EOD outside the Nawalparasi District Contractors Association in Parasi, Nawalparasi, Lumbini. The IED incorporated a pressure cooker. **New Delhi Times** (5/18/17)

Nepal experienced a high number of events in May, due primarily to election violence by opposing political parties. Despite the violence, the government succeeded at holding local elections in three of the seven provinces; the other four provinces will be voting in June, and similar levels of IED violence are expected to occur. Authorities suspect the CPN-M is responsible for many of the events. The highest number of recorded IED events occurred during the Nepalese Constituent Assembly election in November 2013, during which there were 70 IED events (see **November 2013 Monthly**).

IED reporting and casualty statistics derived from open sources are not confirmed; statistics should be considered approximations.

### Southeast Asia: May Significant Activity

#### **Philippines**

In Marawi City, security forces raided the hideout of ASG leader Isnilon Hapilon. The raid turned into an all-out battle once reinforcements were called from Abu Sayyaf Group's (ASG) ally, the Maute Group. The militants began taking over buildings and raising ISIS flags throughout the city. This siege pushed President Duterte to declare martial law on 23 MAY for the island of Mindanao (27 provinces, 33 cities) for 60 days to resolve this conflict. Martial law could be seen as a way to address security concerns and put an end to this long running insurgency in the south. **UPI (5/23/17) Inquirer (5/26/27)** 

The fifth round of the formal peace talks between the NDF and Philippine government were called off following President Duterte's order to the government peace panel not to negotiate "until such time as there are clear indications that an enabling environment conducive to achieving just and sustainable peace in the land." Peace talks are also in jeopardy following remarks from the CPP ordering the NPA to accelerate and intensify attacks against the government a day after the President declared martial law in Mindanao. Despite the formal talks being called off, peace negotiations are still moving forward on both sides and all bilateral agreements remain in effect. **Minda News (5/27/17) Manila Today (5/30/17)** 

Due to the ongoing military operations against the Maute Group in Marawi City and the declaration of martial law, thousands of people have been displaced turning this siege into a humanitarian crisis. Many of the estimated 200,000 residents were forced to flee the city and seek refuge in neighboring towns and provinces. The number of displaced people and people dying in the cross fire have increased since the start. A recent report from OCHA, estimates of the 100,000 plus displaced people, 14% are in designated evacuation centers and the other 80% are staying outside evacuation centers or with relatives/ friends. Philippine Star (5/25/17) GMA Network (5/28/17) IRIN (5/29/17) OCHA (6/1/17)

#### **Thailand**

In May, a security expert predicted an increase in violence in southern Thailand, as younger commanders in the Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN) grow restless with a lack of action from Bangkok. Younger leaders are coming into the organization as a generational transition occurs, and may be more inclined to attack targets outside the south. **Channel News Asia** (5/19/17)

On 25 MAY, Thailand's telecommunications regulator stated that biometric registration would be required to purchase prepaid SIM cards for mobile phones in the south. Planned measures include fingerprinting and facial scanning. A government spokesman said the measure could help prevent insurgents from buying SIM cards for use in IEDs, and assist in identifying individuals connected to IED production and emplacement. **Reuters** (5/25/17)

#### Burma

On 24 MAY, the Burmese Government hosted the second round of the 21st Century Panglong Union Peace Conference in Naypyitaw. The eight signatory groups of the 2015 Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement attended the conference as participants. Representatives of the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army, Ta'ang National Liberation Army and the Arakan Army attended the peace talks at the request of China as "special guests" of the Burmese Government. The "special guest" status of the three National Alliance members signified their "observer only" status at the peace conference. **Myanmar Times** (5/24/17)

#### Malaysia

In early May, Malaysian officials told The Star that they disrupted an ISIS terror cell sometime between March and April that has been smuggling weapons form southern Thailand and stockpiling them for about a year to prepare for attacks locally and abroad. The cell, based in Kelantan, was exposed when police arrested six people in a nationwide drive. The terror cell smuggled several different weapons, including pump guns, Colt M4 Carbines, and Glock semi-automatic pistols. Police are still looking for Muhammad Muzaffa Arieff Junaidi (age 27; hometown: Kampung Gertak, Rantau Panjang, Kelantan), a member of the Kalantan cell who is still at large. Police believe that Junaidi escaped to southern Thailand via Sungai Golok on 22 MAR. **The Star (5/4/17)** 

In early May, Malaysian officials announced that the government had set up a special task force, KL2017, to ensure the security and safety of the 29th Southeast Asian Games which will take place in Kuala Lumpur from 19-30 AUG. The KL2017 Anti-terrorism Task Force will be led by the police's Internal Security and Public Oder Department and the Malaysian Armed Forces. It will include personnel from the Special Action Unit, Komander 69, Bomb Disposal Units, Air Operations Force, General Operations Force, Canine Units, CID, and other general duty personnel. Additionally, a total of 350 police personnel from numerous units recently underwent a drill which included scenarios such as bomb threats, building collapses, and threat by an individual with a dangerous weapon to ensure police preparedness. The Star (5/25/17) New Straits Times (5/12/17)

## Philippines: May IED Events

and nine cache events.



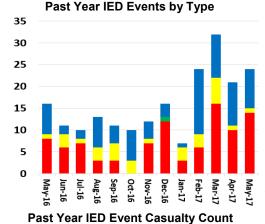
On 6 MAY, two IEDs detonated in Quiapo district, Metro Manila, National Capital Region, Luzon; two civilians were killed and four injured. The first blast's intended target was a Shiite Muslim cleric and the second blast detonated as EOD personnel were securing the blast site. ISIS has claimed responsibility for the attack. **Rappler** 

There were 14 IED detonation events, one found and cleared event,

(5/6/17) NDTV (5/6/17) Inquirer (5/8/17)

On 11 MAY, IEDs were found and cleared and an IED cache was recovered by troops from the 3rd Scout Ranger Battalion in Pamatsaken, Sumisip, Basilan, Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), Basilan. ASG militants emplaced the IEDs around the ranger encampment, Following a firefight with the militants, troops recovered three IEDs and unspecified explosives enough for roughly 30 IEDs. Rappler (5/13/17)

On 13 MAY, an IED cache was recovered by troops from the Marine Battalion Landing Team-2 following a 20-minute firefight with New People's Army (NPA) rebels in Hinalaan, Kalamansig, Sultan Kudarat, SOCCSKSARGEN, Mindanao. The cache contained one M16 and four IEDs. **GMA Network** (5/14/17)



On 22 MAY, an IED cache was recovered by joint forces at a Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) bomb instructor's residence in Capiton, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao, ARMM region, Mindanao. The cache contained a 60mm mortar, a grenade, blasting caps, detonating cords, machined pistol, and a notebook containing instructions for bomb making including detailed ingredients and measurements for explosives along with names and places. **ABS** -CBN (5/22/17) Inquirer (5/22/17)

On 29 MAY, one IED detonated by NPA rebels against four soldiers in Goa, Carmarines Sur, Bicol, Luzon. The soldiers were returning from a fitness test when the device exploded; all four soldiers were able to escape injury. Recovered from the scene were an orange-colored battery and roll of cable wire. **PNA** (5/30/17)

80
60
40
20
0
May-16
Apr-17
Aug-16
CIV KIA
CIV KIA
CIV KIA

100

IED activity remained consistent with last month. Attacks were not heavily attributed to just one particular VEO, but spread across the four main VEOs (NPA, BIFF, ASG and Maute Group). Attacks against security forces continued by the NPA, BIFF and ASG; and security forces recovered multiple caches amongst all the groups.

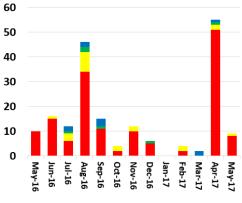
One of the notable events this month were the blasts in Quiapo district, Manila, claimed by ISIS-PHL. The intended target was a Shiite Muslim cleric; targeting for sectarian motivations is rare in the Philippines, but is a common ISIS TTP. This attack, in conjunction with other recent attacks by ISIS-PHL in Metro Manila, could be attempts to gain more recognition and funding from ISIS core.

IED reporting and casualty statistics derived from open sources are not confirmed; statistics should be considered approximations.

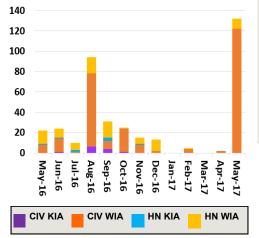
Thailand: May IED Events



Past Year IED Events by Type



**Past Year IED Event Casualty Count** 



There were eight IED detonation events, and one found and cleared event.

On 2 MAY, an IED detonated near Ban Buecho school in Bacho, Narathiwat. Authorities estimated the device weighed 7kg. Plastic and metal fragments were recovered from the scene. The intended target was likely security forces patrolling in the area. **Bangkok Post (5/3/17)** 

On 5 MAY, a CWIED detonated near the Golok River; six Border Patrol Police were injured. Authorities estimated the device weighed 20kg, and may have been triggered on the Malaysian side of the river. **Benar News** (5/5/17) Bangkok Post (5/6/17) Malaysiakini (5/6/17) Star (5/6/17)

On 9 MAY, two IEDs detonated at the Big-C Supercenter in Patani; 80 civilians were wounded. The first IED was concealed in a motorcycle, and detonated in the parking lot; the second was a larger VBIED. Channel News Asia (5/9/17) Thai PBS (5/9/17) ABC News (5/9/17) Aljazeera (5/9/17) The Nation (5/10/17) The Nation (5/13/17)

On 22 MAY, an IED detonated along the road leading to the Yala Islamic Center, Tambon Sateng Nok, Mueang Yala, Yala; four police were injured while riding by on motorcycles. **Bangkok Post (5/22/17) The Nation (5/22/17)** 

On 22 MAY, an IED detonated at Phramongkutklao Hospital, Bangkok; 42 were injured. The IED was made of PVC pipe, recovered from the scene were a battery, wires, a piece of a circuit which is likely an IC timer, nails as an enhancement, and traces of gunpowder; it had a blast radius of 2-3 meters. **Khaosod English (5/22/17) Bangkok Post (5/22/17)** 

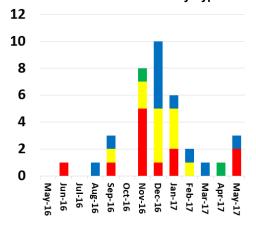
On 30 MAY, an IED was found and cleared near the Thailand Cultural Centre MRT Station in Bangkok. The device was a steel pipe approximately 8 inches long with a 4 inch diameter, packed with 220 grams of low-pressure explosives; the device incorporated enhancements including cut metal, screws, and rusted nails kept in a black plastic bag. The fuse that was attached to a mosquito coil which would have been ignited except rain had dampened the entire device. Follow on reports stated it could have been detonated by ignition or friction. Bangkok Post (5/31/17) Khaosod English (5/31/17) Straits Times (6/1/17)

There was a sharp decline in number of IED events in May; April events were high because of a coordinated attack on power infrastructure. However, there were several casualty causing events in May, including the double IED attack at the Big-C Supercenter; IED events in Bangkok are usually very rare, with most violence isolated in the south. Over the next month, southern Thailand insurgents will likely continue to conduct operations in the south and may avoid operations in northern Thailand to reduce the chances of compromising an operation or supply chain network.

## Burma: May IED Events



Past Year IED Events by Type



There were two detonation events and one cache event.

On 4 MAY, an IED prematurely detonated and a cache was recovered in Theni, Butheedaung, Rakhine State. The cache contained bags of potassium nitrate, sulfur, coal powder, gunpowder and charcoal. **The Express Tribune (5/8/17)** 

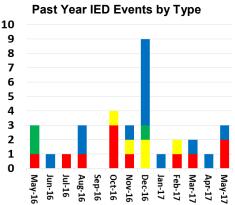
On 16 MAY, two IEDs detonated roadside near the Aung Taw My Monastery located in Tamu, Sagaing. The two detonations occurred forty minutes apart from one another. **Eleven Myanmar (5/17/17)** 

IED activity remained low for the fourth month in a row, after the spike in activity from November 2016 to January 2017. The first event indicates the presence of an IED production cell, who were possibly attempting to enhance the effectiveness of their IEDs. Information about the party responsible for the IED production cell was not released by the authorities, however Rakhine State has experienced increased activity since the end of 2016.

The location of the second event, Tamu, is a village on the Burma-India border. Cross border smuggling and illegal activities are relatively common in the area. Authorities suspended night crossings in January 2017, after it was revealed that an unnamed armed group was using cover of night to conduct operations.

# Indonesia: May IED Events





There were two detonation events and one cache event.

On 15 MAY, an IED cache was recovered from a fishing boat in the Bali sea by Indonesia customs officials as it attempted to smuggle fertilizer from Tanjung Belungkor, Malaysia to Southeast Maluku, Indonesia. The cache contained 2552 bags of fertilizer weighing 25 kilograms each for a total of 63.8 metric tons of ammonium nitrate. The crew of the boat admitted that the fertilizer was intended to be used for blast fishing. Coconuts Bali (5/22/17) BeritaTRANS (5/15/17)

On 21 MAY, two Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD) militants detonated their PBIEDs five minutes apart in the vicinity of the Kampung Melayu bus terminal in East Jakarta city, Jakarta. The combined result of the blasts resulted in two suicide bombers and three policemen killed, and five policemen and six civilians wounded. Both devices were concealed

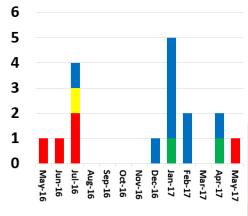
in backpacks, used pressure cooker containers, and had a TATP main charge. The first device, detonated by Ichwan Nurul Salam, was described by police as "less powerful" and was used to lure and attract a crowd. The second device, detonated by Ahmad Sukri, was described as "more powerful" and that it destroyed the perpetrator's body completely. The second device also contained fragmentation enhancements such as bolts, buckshot, and small scissors. It appears that police who were in the area to protect the Ramadan Torch Parade were the target of attack. Tempo (5/28/17) Jakarta Post (5/26/17) Jakarta Post (5/28/17) News.com.au (5/25/17)

IED activity was slightly elevated this month, as were IED-related casualties. The 21 MAY attack is the first suicide bombing in Indonesia since the JUL 2016 Police Headquarters bombing in Solo, Central Java. The 21 MAY attack is likely connected to the 27 FEB Bandung government office bombing, as the devices used in both attacks were described by police as being similar. Additionally, Salam's wife told police that she was introduced to Salam by the 27 FEB bomber. Although ISIS claimed the attack some five days later, the bombing was likely organized locally. A preliminary investigation revealed that the Salam and Sukri may have received their motivation for the attack from a religious community in Cileunyi, Bandung, known as Asykari As-Sunnah. Salam and Sukri attended recitations and preaching sessions on 19 MAY. When police arrested the leaders of the foundation they recovered materials from jailed Islamist cleric Abu Bakar Bashir and ISIS paraphernalia.

## Malaysia: May IED Events



Past Year IED Events by Type



There was one detonation event.

On 14 MAY, a VOIED detonated as a factory worker attempted to enter his car in Taman Pengkjalan Setia, Simpang; one civilian wounded. The device had been tied to the door of a Toyota Corolla and was rigged to detonate when the door was opened. Police found pieces of metal, a battery, wires, and fiber at the scene. The victim believes that he was the target of a loan shark who is attempting to intimidate the victim into settling his debt of RM 300,000. **Free Malaysia (5/15/17) MSN (5/15/17)** 

IED events in Malaysia remained consistently low in May. The 14 MAY event is consistent with Malaysia's trend of IED activity being primarily criminally motivated. Notably, the last two remarkable IED incidents involved either drug traffickers (12 JAN) or illegal moneylenders (17 APR 2016). VOIED switches however, which the 14 MAY event exhibited, are rare.

## Northeast Asia: May Significant Activity

#### China

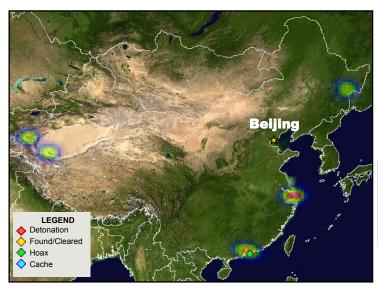
May marks the 50th anniversary of riots in Hong Kong that left 51 dead. The riots started shortly after the Cultural Revolution on mainland China, when fired workers from an artificial flower factory attempted to prevent goods from being shipped. Over the next seven months, encouraged by the Chinese Communist Party, workers committed acts of terrorism, such as clashing with security forces and conducting IED attacks across the city. Finally in December 1967, the Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai ordered the riots to cease from Beijing. **Hong Kong Free Press (5/4/17) Japan Times (5/5/17)** 

On 11 MAY, Hong Kong's authorities conducted terror drill ahead of Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to Hong Kong over the summer. Police and CT forces trained in urban warfare tactics, defusing an IED, and other training that simulated terror attacks used by ISIS in Europe. **Hong Kong Free Press (5/12/17)** 

#### Japan

It was reported in May that a private security firm provided overhead surveillance support for the Tokyo Marathon in February, using a balloon equipped with a zoom lens and a thermal lens. The firm also deployed vehicles with the capability to detect drones. Using the 2013 Boston Marathon Bombing as precedent, Japanese officials have been pushing for a more aggressive security posture ahead of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. An estimated 50,850 public and private security forces are expected to be deployed for the games. **Japan Times (5/4/17)** 

# China: May IED Events



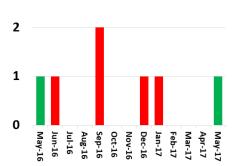
There was one hoax event.

On 31 MAY, an IED hoax was cleared from a shopping mall and boat harbor in Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon, Hong Kong; one female suspect was arrested. The hoax incorporated paper tubes, and alarm clock, and wires. EOD personnel disposed of the hoax device with a controlled detonation. **SCMP (5/31/17) Standard (5/31/17)** 

Reported IED events are rare in China. The May event was considered to be criminal in nature, as the suspect was undergoing psychological treatment and had no connections to terror organizations.

Past Year IED Events by Type

3



### IED Calendar

The IED calendar was established to help our audience maintain awareness of events, such as anniversaries of major attacks, or political, religious or cultural events that often coincide (or can potentially coincide) with a spike in IED events.

5 MAY (IND): Pooram Day

14 MAY (NEP): Local elections

26 MAY (WW): Ramadan Begins

28 MAY (IND): Anniversary of 2002

Kaluchak Attack

29 MAY (NEP): National Day

9 JUN (BUR): Anniversary of

Ceasefire of KIA

9-15 JUN (IND): Jan Pituri Week

25 JUN (WW): Ramadan Ends

13 JUL (INDO): Anniversary of

Marriot-Ritz bombing

28 JUL - 3 AUG (IND): Martyr's

Weeks

	S	М	Т	W	Т	F	S	
May 2017	30	1	2	3	4	5 IND	6	
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
	14 NEP	15	16	17	18	19	20	
	21	22	23	24	25	26 <b>WW</b>	27 <b>WW</b>	
	28 IND WW	29 NEP WW	30 <b>WW</b>	31 <b>WW</b>	1 WW	2 WW	3 WW	
June 2017	4 WW	5 <b>WW</b>	6 <b>WW</b>	7 <b>WW</b>	8 <b>WW</b>	9 BUR IND WW	10 IND WW	
	11 IND WW	12 IND WW	13 IND WW	14 IND WW	15 IND WW	16 <b>WW</b>	17 <b>WW</b>	
	18 <b>WW</b>	19 <b>WW</b>	20 <b>WW</b>	21 <b>WW</b>	22 <b>WW</b>	23 WW	24 <b>WW</b>	
	25 <b>WW</b>	26	27	28	29	30	1	
July 2017	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
	9	10	11	12	13 INDO	14	15	
	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
	23	24	25	26	27	28 IND	29 IND	
	30 IND	31 IND	1 IND	2 IND	3 IND	4	5	
	UNCLASSIFIED 19							

IND – India THA – Thailand NEP – Nepal BUR – Burma WW – Worldwide

# Common Terms and Acronyms

AN - Ammonium Nitrate

ANFO - Ammonium Nitrate Fuel Oil

ARMM – Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao

CIV - Civilian

CBRN – Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nu-

clear

COIN – Counter-insurgency

CWIED - Command Wire IED

DTMF - Dual-Tone Multi-Frequency

EFP - Explosively Formed Projectile

EOD - Explosive Ordnance Disposal

F/C - Found & Cleared

HME - Homemade Explosives

HN - Host Nation (Police, Military, Government)

IDF - Indirect Fire

IDP - Internally Displaced Persons

IED - Improvised Explosive Device

KFR - Kidnap for Ransom

KIA - Killed in Action

LOC - Line of Communication

LPG - Liquefied Petroleum Gas

MSR - Main Supply Routes

NFI – No Further Information

NSTR – Nothing Significant To Report

PBA - Post Blast Analysis

PBIED - Personnel Borne (Suicide Bomb) IED

PCB - Printed Circuit Board

PN - Partner Nation

PPIED - Pressure Plate IED

QRF - Quick Response Force

RCIED - Radio Controlled IED

RCP - Route Clearance Patrols

RPG - Rocket Propelled Grenade

SA - South Asia

SAF - Small Arms Fire

SEA – Southeast Asia

SVBIED - Suicide Vehicle Borne IED

TATP - Triacetone Peroxide

TNT – Trinitrotoluene (C7H5N3O6)

TTP - Tactics, Techniques and Procedures

UXO - Unexploded Ordnance

VBIED – Vehicle Borne IED

VEO – Violent Extremist Organization

VOIED - Victim Operated IED

WIA - Wounded in Action

## Governments, Groups and Organizations

ASG - Abu Sayyaf Group

BIFF - Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters

BIPP - Barisan Islam Perberbasan Patani

BRN-C - Barisan Revolusi Nasional-Coordinate

BSF - Border Security Forces

BNP - Bangladesh National Party

BriMob – Mobile Brigade (Indonesia CT Forces)

CPI-M – Communist Party of India (Maoist)

CPN-M - Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)

CPP - Communist Party of the Philippines

CRPF - Central Reserve Police Force (India)

GMIP - Gerakan Mujahideen Islam Patani

HM - Hizb-ul-Mujahideen

HNLC – Hynniewtrep National Liberation Council

HUJI-B - Harakat ul-Jihad-i-Islami Bangladesh

IB – India's Intelligence Bureau

IM - Indian Mujahideen

IrW - Irregular Warfare

ISI – Inter-Services Intelligence (Pakistan)

ISIS - Islamic State of Iraq ash Sham

JAT – Jemaah Ansharout Tauhid

JI – Jemaah Islamiya

JTMM - Janatantrik Terai Mukti Morcha

JIB - Jemaat-e-Islami Bangladesh

JeM - Jaish-e-Mohammed

JMB - Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh

JMJB – Jama'atul Muslim Janta Bangladesh

KIA - Kachin Independence Army

KIM - Khalifa Islamiya Mindanao

KIO – Kachin Independence Organization

LeT - Lashkar-e Tayyiba

MILF - Moro Islamic Liberation Front

MILF-SOG - MILF-Special Operations Group

MNLF - Moro National Liberation Front

NPA – New People's Army

PNP - Philippine National Police

POLRI - Indonesian National Police

PULO – Patani United Liberation Organization

RAB – Rapid Action Battalion (Bangladesh)

RKK - Runda Kumpulan Kecil

SJMM – Samyukta Jatiya Mukti Morcha

SJTMM – Samyukta Jana Tantrik Terai Mukti Morcha

ULFA - United Liberation Front of Assam

UWSA – United Wa State Army

YCL -Youth Communist League